

DDI #1055-77

15 March 1977

MEMORANDUM FOR: Sayre Stevens
Deputy Director for Intelligence

THROUGH :
Acting Director, Center for Policy Support

FROM : Robert Gates
Center for Policy Support

SUBJECT : IC Staff Paper "Systemic Problems in Intelligence
Analysis on the Soviet Union"

1. In early February, the Production Assessment and Improvement Division of the IC Staff circulated to a number of intelligence community officials a paper (Tab III) addressing what it termed as serious, fundamental problems in the Community's posture for intelligence analysis on the Soviet Union. The paper was prepared primarily by the IC Staff. We, in turn, circulated your copy of the IC Staff paper to OWI, OSI, OSR, OER, ORPA, OCR, FBIS, OTR and DDO for comment. The following paragraphs summarize the IC Staff papers and recommendations therein and recommend further steps that you take with the IC Staff.

The IC Staff Paper

2. The study is couched in terms of intelligence community posture for estimates on the Soviet Union, though in addressing this subject it touches on the entire range of analysis of the Soviet Union in the Community. The problem, as stated in the paper is:

"How well is the Intelligence Community postured to assess the Soviet threat in all its dimensions? How well can the Community lucidly analyze and portray the strategic motives, intent, drives, constraints, and probable future courses of the Soviet Union? How well can it make a comprehensive assessment of Soviet political, economic and military capabilities?"

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The paper asserts that the challenges for the Intelligence Community over the next several years are to understand Soviet purpose and motivation; to determine strengths and weaknesses in Soviet political, economic and military challenges to US interests; to make comprehensive assessments of the import of these challenges; and to analyze critical areas of potential military interaction between the two sides.

3. To meet these challenges, the paper contends that the Intelligence Community needs:

- more sophisticated treatment of Soviet perspectives of the US and other countries;
- more insight into Soviet internal decision processes and constraints and the factors driving Soviet military programs;
- a better view of coming Soviet leaders;
- sustained, detailed analysis of Soviet policy and goals;
- to improve its ability to assess Soviet/Warsaw Pact warwaging capabilities;
- to develop a holistic view of Soviet military R&D;
- to improve the predictive value of economic (burden) analysis in contrast to documenting the cost of past military program;
- to improve our grasp of Soviet operational concepts, including more comprehensive analysis of Soviet doctrine and exercises;
- improved use of intelligence data, including compilations integrating human sources on the USSR, more comprehensive and timely reduction of relevant data on Soviet military exercises, accelerated efforts to compile basic economic data on the USSR, and more attention to detailed data needed to support net assessments;
- more basic research to provide a detailed understanding of Soviet internal affairs, including studies on a broader range of basic economic, industrial and technological subjects, studies of Soviet society and dissent, factors influencing Soviet

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decisionmaking, studies of the R&D establishment, basic military interaction studies;

--to undertake measures aimed at overcoming the Community's lack of trained Soviet specialists, including a program to build up and sustain a group of intelligence production personnel who are experts on the Soviet Union; programs to draw upon academic institutions, other government agencies and private research organizations to complement Community efforts on the USSR; and efforts to inform senior Community analysts (managers?) of the results of on-going research on the Soviet Union;

--to overcome bureaucratic barriers to dissemination of intelligence information;

--to investigate the relevance of NIEs to users' needs; and

--to take measures to get good analysts back doing analysis versus current intelligence support, data management, liaison and committee work, ad hoc tasks, intra and interoffice coordination, and assignment as action officers for NIEs, NSC studies and other interagency or Community efforts.

Next Steps

4. In its covering memorandum, the IC Staff proposes that its paper be used alternatively as 1) background for NFIB and PRC (CFI) mechanisms to set in motion a series of "get-well" actions, each considered on its merits; 2) an NFIB and PRC (CFI) agenda for more systematic community action program including community working groups to develop implementation plans in several areas, an IC Staff-NIO consortium to research ways to make NIEs more cost effective, and a user-Community consortium to help guide a systematic Community work program of military interaction analyses and in support of net assessments; or 3) use of the paper as proposed in the second alternative but privately with an inner group of Community elite to form an ad hoc steering group to orchestrate Community funding, manning and planning to move forward on a "get well" program.

5. The responses from various DDI offices are at Tab II. The offices generally agree that all of these proposed alternatives are premature and, in view of the broadbrush approach, misdirected. They would be premature because of the unfinished Presidential Review Memorandum on intelligence structure and the accession of a new DCI, and the changes that both are likely to make in the way the Community does its business. They would be misdirected in that the IC Staff

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has not adequately investigated efforts already underway in the Community to come to grips with many of the problems identified and therefore is not sufficiently well-informed to know what areas are indeed in need of priority attention. Similarly, the Staff has not adequately studied which problems could be more effectively addressed by members of the Community acting separately rather than jointly (or vice versa).

6. The proposed memorandum for your signature to at Tab I would summarize DDI views on the IC Staff paper and its recommendations, noting both the positive and negative aspects of the paper. It would also recommend that the IC Staff:

--delay further action until completion of PRM 11 and PRC action relating thereto, and until we have a better idea of the changes the new DCI has in mind;

--inform itself about remedial measures underway in the various intelligence agencies to cope with the problems and challenges identified by NFIB and in the IC Staff paper; and

--be aware that there is general recognition in the Community of the problems and challenges relating to the Soviet area and, therefore in future similar endeavors, can best assist the members of the Community by focusing on specific persistent problems/deficiencies and specific recommended remedies.

Recommendation

7. I recommend that you sign the memorandum to at Tab I.

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/s/
ROBERT GATES

Attachments

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